



Frequently Asked Questions

Maine – General Election 2022

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Note: This FAQ is not exhaustive. Situations or inquiries may arise that are not answered below. In those circumstances, contact your hotline captain or command center for assistance. Please make sure to record all of the voter's contact information should follow-up be necessary.

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REGISTERING TO VOTE

1. **ELIGIBILITY:** Can I register to vote?

To be eligible for registering to vote, the person must be a United States citizen, at least 16 years of age, and have established a fixed and principal home in Maine.¹

To vote in a General Election or Referendum, voters must be registered to vote in the community where they reside and be at least 18 years of age. A 17 year old may vote in a Primary Election if that person will be 18 by the General Election.²

2. **PRIMARY ELECTION:** Can I vote in the primary election? Do I have to be a member of a party to vote in its primary?

Voters must be registered with a political party to vote in the primary election.

Note: Maine Legislature recently passed a bill, LD 231, which allows for a semi-open primary system, allowing voters who have not registered with a political party to cast a ballot in the primary. This law takes effect on January 1, 2024.

3. **STATUS:** Am I registered to vote?

To find out if a voter is registered to vote, the voter should contact his or her local municipal election official. For a listing of municipal election officials see the Maine Secretary of State's website, "Municipal Clerks & Registrars" page (<http://www.maine.gov/sos/cec/elec/munic.html>).

4. **HOW:** How do I register to vote? Can I register online? Do I need a printer? Can I register to vote in person?

¹ Me. Sec'y of State, *State of Maine Voter Guide*, <https://www.maine.gov/sos/cec/elec/voter-info/voterguide.html>.

² *Id.*

Maine voters can register to vote by filling out a voter registration card at the voter's town office or city hall, through any Motor Vehicle branch office, in most state and federal social service agencies, or at voter registration drives.

Maine voters may also download and print a voter registration application, located at the following links:

- A Fillable PDF is available at the following link:
<https://www.maine.gov/sos/cec/elec/upcoming/pdf/voterregcard20.pdf>
- A Microsoft Word version is available by clicking here:
<https://www.maine.gov/sos/cec/elec/upcoming/votercard.doc>

If the voter does not have access to a computer or printer, the voter should contact their town clerk to have a voter registration card mailed to you. A printed version of the voter registration card, with the voter's original signature, must be kept on file by the town clerk, so the card cannot be transmitted electronically. Completed voter registration cards may be hand delivered or mailed to the town office or city hall; such information is available at the following website. (<http://www.maine.gov/sos/cec/elec/munic.html>).³

Maine also has "same day" voter registration. For additional information, see Question #7.

5. **IDENTIFICATION:** What ID is required to register to vote?

For purposes of registering to vote, voters must provide one of the following documents as proof of identification:

- Government document or credential with photo ID (i.e. driver's license, State ID, valid U.S. Passport, military ID)
- Government ID document/credential without photo (i.e. certified birth certificate or signed Social Security card)
- An official document that shows name and address of voter (i.e. eligibility for public benefits, utility bill, bank statement, government check, paycheck stub)
- Student photo ID from a state-approved public or private school or institute of higher education in Maine
- Verified unique identifier (Maine driver's license number or last four numbers of Social Security Number)

Newly registered voters who have not previously delivered a copy of the required identification must bring it to vote.⁴

6. **DEADLINES:** When is/was the voter registration deadline? Are there different deadlines whether I register by mail, in-person, online or on Election Day?

There is no cut-off date for registering to **vote in person** at voter's town office or city hall. If voters want to register to **vote by absentee/mail**, the cut-off date is the close of business on the 21st day before the election.⁵ (October 18, 2022 for the 2022 General Election)

7. **SAME DAY:** Does my state have Same Day Registration? If so, what is the process?

³ Me. Sec'y of State, *State of Maine Voter Guide*, <https://www.maine.gov/sos/cec/elec/voter-info/voterguide.html>.

⁴ Me. Stat. tit. 21-A § 112-A; Me. Sec'y of State, *State of Maine Voter Guide*, <https://www.maine.gov/sos/cec/elec/voter-info/voterguide.html>.

⁵ Me. Sec'y of State, *Elections FAQ*, https://www.maine.gov/portal/government/edemocracy/elections_faq.html#registering

Yes. Voters may register on election day at their polling place.⁶ Voters who wish to register in person on election day will need to write down their Maine driver's license/Maine State ID number or the last four digits of their social security number (if they don't have a Maine driver's license/Maine State ID) in their application. In addition, voters will need to prove their identity and residency by showing proof of identification. See Question #5 for acceptable types of identification.

If a voter cannot prove identity and residency, their name will still be included in the list of registered voters, but the voter will only be permitted to cast a provisional (challenged) ballot.⁷ Challenged ballots are counted along with regular ballots. If the number of challenged ballots could affect the outcome of the vote (exceeding in number the difference between winning and losing candidates), then they are reviewed by the Maine election authorities. If the voter must take further action to verify his or her identity or residency, the voter will be contacted by the election authorities before a decision is made whether to count or not to count the challenged ballot.⁸

8. PERMANENT MOVE: I have moved permanently and I didn't update my voter registration, can I vote?

If a voter has moved **within the same municipality**, the voter should notify the registrar to change the address on the voter registration list and in the central voter registration system. If a voter has moved **to a different municipality**, the voter should re-register with the registrar of his or her new municipality.

If the voter fails to notify the registrar before election day, the answer to this question depends on where the voter moved. Refer to the table below.

Moved within the same district	Moved to a different district but within the same municipality	Moved to a different municipality
<p>The voter should go to the appropriate polling place associated with his or her new address. To determine the relevant polling place, see the "Maine Voter Information Lookup Service" web page (http://www.maine.gov/portal/government/edemocracy/voter_lookup.php).</p> <p>If the voter registration list still lists the voter's old address, the voter will need to ask the municipal registrar to change the address on the voter registration list and in the central voter registration system on Election Day.⁹</p>	<p>The voter should go to the appropriate polling place associated with his or her new address. To determine the relevant polling place, see the "Maine Voter Information Lookup Service" web page (http://www.maine.gov/portal/government/edemocracy/voter_lookup.php).</p> <p>If the voter registration list still lists the voter's old address, the voter will need to ask the municipal registrar to change the address on the voter registration list and in the central voter registration system on Election Day.¹⁰</p>	<p>The voter will need to re-register to vote in person with the registrar of his or her new municipality on Election Day by showing proof of identity and residency.</p>

⁶ Me. Stat. tit. 21-A § 121-A.

⁷ Me. Stat. tit. 21-A § 121(1-A).

⁸ Me. Stat. tit. 21-A § 696(1); Me. Sec'y of State, *Voter Information*, <https://www.maine.gov/sos/cec/elec/voter-info/index.html>.

⁹ Me. Stat. tit. 21-A §§ 129(3); 661.

¹⁰ Me. Stat. tit. 21-A §§ 129(3); 661.

9. TEMPORARY MOVE: I have moved temporarily. How can I vote?

Maine requires that the voter must have established and maintain a voting residence in the municipality in which the voter is registered.¹¹ So long as that voting residence is maintained, the voter should request an absentee ballot.

10. STUDENT: I am a college student. Can I register to vote where I go to school? What if I am taking classes remotely? Where can I vote?

Yes, college students have the right to register in the municipality in Maine where they attend school if you have a present intention to remain at your Maine school address (e.g., dorm, apartment, house) for the time being. In determining a voter's residence, the registrar may consider several factors, including a direct statement of intention by the voter; the location of any dwelling currently occupied by the voter; the voter's mailing address; the address at which a motor vehicle owned by the voter is registered; the receipt of public benefits conditioned upon residency; and other factors.¹²

11. LIVING ABROAD: I am living abroad and/or serving in the military. How can I register and/or vote?

First-time voters who wish to register to vote need to complete the "Federal Post Application" which is available at <https://www.maine.gov/sos/cec/elec/fedpostcardapp.pdf>

The completed Federal Post Application can be submitted in one of three ways:

- by email to UOCAVA.CEC@maine.gov,
- by fax to 1-877-443-1302, or
- by mail to:
Bureau of Corporations, Elections, and Commissions
Elections Division
101 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333-0101

To request an absentee ballot, fill out the Federal Post Card Application or submit online request at <https://apps.web.maine.gov/cgi-bin/online/AbsenteeBallot/index.pl>

Uniformed Service and Overseas (UOCAVA) voters should register and enroll using the last residence address where they lived in Maine immediately before leaving the United States.¹³ In the event the requested absentee ballot does not arrive, please contact the Elections Division at 1-888-VOTESME (1-888-868-3763) or UOCAVA.CEC@maine.gov.

Depending on the method you chose for ballot delivery, the ballot will be mailed to the address provided or can be accessed through State's online service.

The deadline to submit your voter registration application (FPCA) or request an absentee ballot is 5 p.m. on the day before Election Day.¹⁴

¹¹ Me. Stat. tit. 21-A §§ 111, 112(3).

¹² Me. Stat. tit. 21-A § 112(1); <https://www.maine.gov/sos/cec/elec/voter-info/resident.html>

¹³ Me. Sec'y of State, *Maine Voting Residence Fact Sheet*, <https://www.maine.gov/sos/cec/elec/voter-info/resident.html>

¹⁴ Me. Sec'y of State, *Uniformed Service & Overseas (UOCAVA) Voters*, <https://www.maine.gov/sos/cec/elec/voter-info/uocava.html>

12. CRIMINAL CONVICTION: I have a criminal conviction. Can I register to vote?

Yes. A criminal conviction does not affect your eligibility to vote in the state of Maine.¹⁵

13. INCARCERATED: I am currently incarcerated. Can I register to vote?

Yes. If you are incarcerated in a correctional facility or in a county jail, you are entitled to register for absentee voting in the Maine municipality where you previously established residency (a fixed and principal home to which you intend to return) prior to incarceration.¹⁶

HOW TO VOTE: ELECTION DAY

14. HOURS: When do the polls open/close on Election Day?

For municipalities with a population of 500 or more, the polls must open between 6:00 a.m. and 8:00 a.m. For municipalities with a population of less than 500, the polls must open between 6:00 a.m. and 10:00 a.m. The municipal officers of each municipality will determine the time of opening the polls within these limits.¹⁷

All polling places close at 8:00 p.m. on Election Day, except in municipalities with a population of less than 100, which may choose to close the polls after all registered voters have voted. The election official must give the voters present at the voting place at closing time the opportunity to vote. The voters who arrive at the voting place after closing time may not vote. The municipal clerk will state the times of opening and closing of the polls in the notice of the election.¹⁸ To find out when your polling place opens, contact your municipal clerk.

If you are a hotline volunteer or a field volunteer and a polling place is not open at 8:00 a.m. (or 10:00 a.m. in a municipality with population less than 500), advise voters to stay at the polling location and contact your hotline captain/command center. If you are a hotline volunteer or a field volunteer and a polling place closes before 8:00 p.m. or is not letting voters who were in line at 8:00 p.m. vote, advise voters to stay in line and contact your hotline captain/command center.

***Note to hotline volunteer:** If you learn that a polling place prohibits those who were in line by the time the polls closed from voting, advise voters to stay at the polling location and contact your hotline captain immediately.

15. POLLING LOCATION: Where do I vote on Election Day?

Voters can determine their proper polling place by checking the “Maine Voter Information Lookup Service” web page (http://www.maine.gov/portal/government/edemocracy/voter_lookup.php).

***Note to hotline volunteer:** Voters should be advised to check the polling place listed on the Voter Notification Card they received from the local election authority a few days before the election.

¹⁵ Me. Stat. tit. 21-A § 111.

¹⁶ Me. Stat. tit. 21-A § 112(14); Me. Sec’y of State, *Maine Voting Residence Fact Sheet*, <https://www.maine.gov/sos/cec/elec/voter-info/resident.html>.

¹⁷ Me. Stat. tit. 21-A § 626(1).

¹⁸ Me. Stat. tit. 21-A § 626(2)-(3).

16. CLOSING: What if the polls close when I am already in line? ?

Voters should not leave and will be able to vote so long as they are in line when polls close.

***Note to hotline volunteer:** If you learn of long lines, notify your hotline captain immediately.

17. IDENTIFICATION: What identification is required to vote?

If a voter has registered to vote in advance in Maine, the voter does not need to show identification to get a ballot.¹⁹ If a voter did not register to vote in advance, the voter will need to register before voting which requires identification. See Question #5.

18. NO IDENTIFICATION: Can I vote without providing identification?

Yes. If a voter has registered to vote in advance in Maine, the voter does not need to show identification to get a ballot.²⁰ If a voter did not register to vote in advance, the voter will need to register before voting which requires identification. See Question #5.

19. NOT ON ROLLS AT MY POLLING PLACE: I am at my polling place but am not showing up on the voter registration roll. Can I vote where I am?

If a voter is at the correct polling place, the voter should ask the election official to call the registrar or clerk and confirm their registration. If the voter has not been registered, Maine has same-day voting registration and the voter can register on the day of the election.

20. PROVISIONAL BALLOT: If I don't have an ID, can I request a provisional ballot? My name is not on the rolls at my polling place, can I request a provisional ballot?

Inquire why the voter was offered a provisional (challenged) ballot. Was it for one of the following reasons:

- You are not enrolled in the proper party, if you are voting in a primary election;
- You are not qualified to be a registered voter because:
 - You do not meet the age requirements;
 - You are not a citizen of the United States; or
 - You are not a resident of the municipality or appropriate electoral district of the municipality;
- You registered to vote in person at your town office or on election day and did not provide satisfactory proof of identity and residency;
- You did not properly apply for an absentee ballot;
- You did not properly complete the affidavit on the absentee return envelope;
- You did not cast the ballot or complete the affidavit before the appropriate witness;
- You engaged in a prohibited communication while marking your ballot;
- You did not return your ballot to the clerk within the prescribed time;
- You voted using the name of another;

¹⁹ Me. Stat. tit. 21-A § 671(1), Me. Sec'y of State, *Your Right to Vote in Maine*, <https://www.maine.gov/sos/cec/elec/voter-info/right.html>.

²⁰ Me. Stat. tit. 21-A § 671(1), Me. Sec'y of State, *Your Right to Vote in Maine*, <https://www.maine.gov/sos/cec/elec/voter-info/right.html>.

- You voted using the wrong ballot for the electoral district or political party, if applicable; or
- You violated a provision of applicable Maine election law?²¹

Other than for these reasons, the voter should be able to cast a regular ballot. **A provisional (challenged) ballot should be a last resort.** Challenged ballots are counted along with regular ballots. If the number of challenged ballots could affect the outcome of the vote (exceeding in number the difference between winning and losing candidates), then they are reviewed by the Maine election authorities. If the voter must take further action to verify his or her identity or residency, the voter will be contacted by the election authorities before a decision is made whether to count or not to count the challenged ballot.²²

HOW TO VOTE: EARLY VOTING

(in some states called “in-person absentee”)

21. AVAILABILITY: Is there early voting in my state (whether called early voting or in person absentee voting)?

Any registered voter can vote by absentee ballot by returning their absentee ballot by mail, or in person. A voter does not need to have a specific reason for requesting his or her absentee ballot.²³ **Absentee ballots may be requested from 3 months before the Election Day until the 3rd business day before election day** (unless special circumstances exist).²⁴ Voters should make their request early to allow enough time for the ballot to be mailed to them. **Absentee ballots must be received by the municipal clerk's office by 8:00 p.m. on Election Day.**²⁵

A voter may vote absentee at his or her town clerk's office as soon as absentee ballots are available, and up until Election Day. Absentee ballots are available at least 30 days before election day. A voter who has not previously registered, will need to register before casting an in-person absentee ballot. A voter can register in person at their town clerk's office at any time, including the same day that they are casting the in-person absentee ballot. For more information on absentee voting, please visit the Maine Secretary of State's "Absentee Voting Guide" web page (<http://www.maine.gov/sos/cec/elec/voter-info/absenteeguide.html>).

22. ELIGIBILITY: Do I have to have a reason to vote early?

No, a voter does not need to have a specific reason to vote early by absentee ballot.²⁶

23. WHEN: When does early voting begin/end?

²¹ Me. Stat. tit. 21-A § 673(1)(A).

²² Me. Stat. tit. 21-A § 696; Me. Sec'y of State, *Voter Information*, <https://www.maine.gov/sos/cec/elec/voter-info/index.html>.

²³ Me. Stat. tit. 21-A § 751; Me. Sec'y of State, *Absentee Voting Guide*, <https://www.maine.gov/sos/cec/elec/voter-info/absenteeguide.html>.

²⁴ Me. Stat. tit. 21-A §§ 753-A(1), 753-B(2); Me. Sec'y of State, *Absentee Voting Guide*, <https://www.maine.gov/sos/cec/elec/voter-info/absenteeguide.html>.

²⁵ Me. Stat. tit. 21-A § 755; Me. Sec'y of State, *Absentee Voting in Maine*, <https://www.maine.gov/sos/cec/elec/voter-info/absent.html>.

²⁶ Me. Stat. tit. 21-A § 751.

Absentee in-person voting is available at least 30 days before the election at the municipal clerk's office. The deadline for absentee voting in the presence of the clerk, unless special circumstances exist, is the Thursday before the election.

24. WHERE: *Where do I vote during early voting?*

A voter may vote before Election Day only through absentee in-person voting at the municipal clerk's office.

25. IDENTIFICATION: *What identification is required for early voting? What if I don't have an ID?*

If a voter has registered to vote in advance in Maine, the voter does not need to show identification to get a ballot.²⁷ If a voter did not register to vote in advance, the voter will need to register before voting which requires identification. See Question #5.

HOW TO VOTE: VOTE BY MAIL

26. AUTOMATIC MAIL BALLOT: *Will I automatically be sent a ballot in the mail?*

See Question #43.

27. ELIGIBILITY: *Do I need a specific reason to vote by mail?*

See Question #22.

28. APPLICATION DEADLINE: *What is the deadline for requesting an mail-in ballot?*

See Question #44.

29. APPLICATION RETURN: *How do I submit my mail-in ballot application? Can someone return it for me? Does it have to be postmarked by a specific date?*

See Question #47.

30. IDENTIFICATION: *Are there identification requirements when I return my absentee ballot application and/or ballot?*

See Question #45.

31. RECEIVING MAIL BALLOT: *Does the ballot have to be sent to my home, or can I have it sent somewhere else? What if I don't have a home address or my address is a PO Box?*

²⁷ Me. Stat. tit. 21-A § 671(1); Me. Sec'y of State, *Your Right to Vote in Maine*, <https://www.maine.gov/sos/cec/elec/voter-info/right.html>.

The ballot will be sent to the address listed on the form. If the person is homeless or living in a shelter, the person is entitled to register to vote in the Maine municipality where they currently reside, even if the person has a non-traditional address such as a park bench or other physical location. The person may submit a physical description of your place of residence, under oath, to the municipal clerk in lieu of other residency documentation. Voters who are homeless are not required to present a mailing address in order to register to vote.²⁸

32. MISSED THE APPLICATION DEADLINE: What if I have not requested a mail-in ballot by the deadline?

As long as you are registered, even if you requested or returned an absentee ballot, you should be allowed to vote in person by regular ballot.

33. STATUS OF APPLICATION AND/OR BALLOT: How can I check the status of my application and/or mail-in ballot?

See Question #48.

34. APPLICATION OR BALLOT REJECTED: I learned my mail-in ballot application and/or ballot was rejected. What can I do to fix any errors or get another one?

See Question #49.

35. COMPLETING BALLOT: How do I complete the mail-in ballot?

See Question #50

36. ASSISTANCE COMPLETING BALLOT: Can someone assist me in filling out my ballot?

See Question #51.

37. DEADLINE TO RETURN BALLOT: What is the deadline for the ballot to be received? Does it have to be postmarked by a specific date? Can I drop it off in person?

See Question #52.

38. BALLOT DROP OFF LOCATIONS: What are the locations for dropping off a ballot (instead of mailing it)?

See Question #53.

39. ASSISTANCE DROPPING OFF BALLOT: Can someone else drop off my completed ballot for me?

See Question #54.

²⁸ Me. Sec’y of State, *Maine Voting Residence Fact Sheet*, <https://www.maine.gov/sos/cec/elec/voter-info/resident.html>

40. **LOST OR SPOILED BALLOT:** What if I lost my mail-in ballot, made a mistake on it (spoiled it), or I received an incorrect ballot?

See Question #55.

41. **NON-RECEIPT OF BALLOT:** What if I requested a mail-in ballot but have not received it? What are my options for voting?

See Question #56.

42. **IN PERSON OPTION:** What if I requested or received a mail-in ballot but I want to vote in person on Election Day?

See Questions #57 and 58.

HOW TO VOTE: ABSENTEE

43. **ELIGIBILITY:** Am I eligible to request an absentee ballot?

Any registered voter can vote by absentee ballot. Note, a voter does not need to have a specific reason to vote early by absentee ballot.²⁹

Maine does not mail absentee ballots automatically. There are numerous ways to request an absentee ballot: First, the voter may contact the municipal clerk in the town or city where you are registered to vote, in person or by phone. Voters may use the following link to locate his or her municipal clerk:

<https://www.maine.gov/sos/cec/elec/munic.html>

Second, voters can request their own ballot electronically using the Secretary of State's online absentee ballot request service. The approved online form can be found at the following web site:

[http://www.maine.gov/cgi-bin/online/Absentee Ballot/index.pl](http://www.maine.gov/cgi-bin/online/Absentee%20Ballot/index.pl)

Finally, the voter may make a written request by completing an absentee ballot application. Additionally, a voter can obtain a ballot for an immediate family member in this same way. A ballot will be mailed to the voter directly or to an immediate family member making the request.

NOTE: Ballots obtained by the voter or an immediate family member do not require witnesses, unless the voter receives assistance from another person in reading or marking the ballot.

Applications are available starting 3 months before the election from the municipal clerk or online at: [http://www.maine.gov/cgi-bin/online/Absentee Ballot/index.pl](http://www.maine.gov/cgi-bin/online/Absentee%20Ballot/index.pl)

44. **APPLICATION DEADLINE:** What is the deadline for requesting an absentee ballot?

²⁹ Me. Stat. tit. 21-A § 751.

Absentee ballots may be requested from 3 months before the Election Day until the 3rd business day before election day (unless special circumstances exist).³⁰ Voters should make their request early to allow enough time for the ballot to be mailed to them.

45. IDENTIFICATION: Are there any identification requirements?

There are no identification requirements, so long as the voter has previously registered by providing a copy of identification previously. For first-time voters, see Question #5 for additional information on acceptable proof of identification.

46. EMERGENCY: Is there an emergency absentee ballot? If so, am I eligible?

Yes, under certain circumstances. A voter who has an unexpected absence, illness that prevents the voter's ability to leave home or a treatment facility, physical disability, or inability to travel to the polls (only for voters who are residents of a coastal island war or precinct) can request an absentee ballot after the deadline.³¹

47. APPLICATION RETURN: Where and how can I return my absentee ballot application? Can someone return it for me?

Absentee ballots must be received by the municipal clerk's office by 8:00 p.m. on Election Day.³² A voter may vote absentee at his or her town clerk's office as soon as absentee ballots are available, and up until the Thursday before Election Day. Absentee ballots are available at least 30 days before election day. A voter who has not previously registered to vote will need to register before casting an in-person absentee ballot.

48. STATUS OF APPLICATION AND/OR BALLOT: How can I check the status of my absentee ballot application and/or absentee ballot return?

Voters may check their absentee ballot status online if they have originally requested the ballot through the online absentee ballot request service, available at the following link: <https://apps.web.maine.gov/cgi-bin/online/AbsenteeBallot/ballot-status.pl>. All other voters must contact their municipal clerk / election official in order to check on the status of their absentee ballot. For a listing of municipal election officials see the Maine Secretary of State's website, "Municipal Clerks & Registrars" page (<http://www.maine.gov/sos/cec/elec/munic.html>).

49. APPLICATION OR BALLOT REJECTED: I learned my absentee ballot application and/or ballot was rejected. How can I confirm this and what can I do to fix any errors or get another one?

The voter should contact their local clerk / municipal election official. For a listing of municipal election officials see the Maine Secretary of State's website, "Municipal Clerks & Registrars" page (<http://www.maine.gov/sos/cec/elec/munic.html>).

50. COMPLETING BALLOT: How do I complete the absentee ballot?

³⁰ Me. Stat. tit. 21-A §§ 753-A(1), 753-B(2); Me. Sec'y of State, *Absentee Voting Guide*, <https://www.maine.gov/sos/cec/elec/voter-info/absenteeguide.html>.

³¹ Me. Stat. tit. 21-A M.R.S. § 753-B(2)(D).

³² Me. Stat. tit. 21-A § 755; Me. Sec'y of State, *Absentee Voting in Maine*, <https://www.maine.gov/sos/cec/elec/voter-info/absent.html>.

Voters should fill out the absentee ballot and return it to the municipal clerk as instructed.³³

51. ASSISTANCE COMPLETING BALLOT: *Can someone assist me filling out the ballot?*

Yes. If voters need help reading or marking the ballot, voters may ask a relative or friend for assistance. The helper does not have to be a voter or old enough to vote. An election official can also help voters read or mark a ballot. However, a voter's employer or union official cannot help them vote.³⁴

52. BALLOT DEADLINES: *What is the deadline for the ballot to be postmarked and/or received by, including dropping it off in person?*

Absentee ballots must be received by the municipal clerk's office by 8:00 p.m. on Election Day.³⁵ The postmark date is not relevant.

53. BALLOT DROP OF LOCATIONS: *Where can I drop off a ballot (instead of mailing it)?*

The voter may drop off the absentee ballot at the office of its municipal clerk. For a listing of municipal election officials see the Maine Secretary of State's website, "Municipal Clerks & Registrars" page (<http://www.maine.gov/sos/cec/elec/munic.html>).

54. ASSISTANCE DROPPING OFF: *Can someone else drop off my completed ballot for me?*

Voters may make a written request for a "third person" (someone other than the voter or the voter's immediate family member) to obtain and hand-deliver an absentee ballot. Voters must designate, in a written request or application, the specific third person who will handle and deliver the ballot. Only this designated third person may handle the absentee ballot. Ballots cast in this way must be witnessed by either a notary public, a municipal clerk, a clerk of courts, or two other witnesses.³⁶

55. LOST OR SPOILED: *What if I lost my absentee ballot or it is spoiled or I received an incorrect one?*

As long as the voter is registered, even if the voter requested or returned an absentee ballot, the voter should be allowed to vote in person by regular ballot. Any returned absentee ballot will not be counted if the voter has voted in person.³⁷ It is recommended that the voter bring the spoiled or incorrect ballot, if the voter still has it. The voter may also contact his or her municipal clerk for additional information. For a listing of municipal election officials see the Maine Secretary of State's website, "Municipal Clerks & Registrars" page (<http://www.maine.gov/sos/cec/elec/munic.html>).

If a voter spoils a ballot, the voter may obtain a replacement, not more than twice, by returning the spoiled ballot to the election clerk in charge of issuing ballots. The warden, ward clerk or deputy warden shall write "Spoiled by voter" on the spoiled ballot and sign it. If a replacement ballot is issued to the voter, the warden,

³³ Me. Sec'y of State, *Absentee Voting Guide*, <https://www.maine.gov/sos/cec/elec/voter-info/absenteeguide.html>; Me. Sec'y of State, *Absentee Voting in Maine*, <https://www.maine.gov/sos/cec/elec/voter-info/AbsenteeAnimationNOV320.Updated092120.pdf>.

³⁴ Me. Stat. tit. 21-A § 672; Me. Sec'y of State, *Election FAQ*, https://www.maine.gov/portal/government/edemocracy/elections_faq.html#registering

³⁵ Me. Stat. tit. 21-A § 755; Me. Sec'y of State, *Absentee Voting in Maine*, <https://www.maine.gov/sos/cec/elec/voter-info/absent.html>.

³⁶ Me. Sec'y of State, *Absentee Voting Guide*, <https://www.maine.gov/sos/cec/elec/voter-info/absenteeguide.html>.

³⁷ Me. Stat. tit. 21-A § 759(3)(D).

ward clerk or deputy warden shall also mark "Replacement ballot issued" on the spoiled ballot. The election official shall then segregate the spoiled ballot with any other spoiled ballots in an envelope labeled "Spoiled ballots" and shall package and return the envelope of segregated ballots in accordance with the law. The Secretary of State will provide the clerk of each municipality with either a label and instructions on proper handling of spoiled ballots or a special envelope printed with this label and instructions.³⁸

56. NON-RECEIPT OF BALLOT: What if I requested an absentee ballot but have not received it? Can I do anything?

The voter should contact his or her local municipal election official. For a listing of municipal election officials see the Maine Secretary of State's website, "Municipal Clerks & Registrars" page (<http://www.maine.gov/sos/cec/elec/munic.html>).

57. IN PERSON OPTION: What if I requested an absentee ballot but I want to vote in person on Election Day?

As long as you are registered, even if you requested or returned an absentee ballot, you should be allowed to vote in person by regular ballot. Any returned absentee ballot will not be counted if you have voted in person.³⁹ It is recommended that the voter bring the requested absentee ballot with them to their polling place, if the voter still has it.

58. IN PERSON ABSENTEE: Where do I vote in-person absentee? When can I do this?

At the office of the municipal clerk. The voter may drop off the absentee ballot at the office of its municipal clerk. For a listing of municipal election officials see the Maine Secretary of State's website, "Municipal Clerks & Registrars" page (<http://www.maine.gov/sos/cec/elec/munic.html>).⁴⁰

POLLING PLACE ISSUES

59. POLLING PLACE NOT OPEN: The polling place is not open. What should I do?

If you are a hotline volunteer or a field volunteer and a polling place is not open at 8:00 a.m. (or 10:00 a.m. in a municipality with population less than 500), advise voters to stay at the polling location and contact your hotline captain/command center. If you are a hotline volunteer or a field volunteer and a polling place closes before 8:00 p.m. or is not letting voters who were in line at 8:00 p.m. vote, advise voters to stay in line and contact your hotline captain/command center.

***Note to hotline volunteer:** If you learn of a polling place not opening on time or is closed, notify your hotline captain immediately.

60. LONG LINES: There are long lines at the polling place. What should I do? What if the polls are closing while I'm in line?

³⁸ Me. Stat. tit. 21-A § 693.

³⁹ Me. Stat. tit. 21-A § 759(3)(D).

⁴⁰ Me. Sec'y of State, *Absentee Voting Guide*, <https://www.maine.gov/sos/cec/elec/voter-info/absenteeguide.html>.

Voters should not leave and will be able to vote so long as they are in line when polls close.

***Note to hotline volunteer:** If you learn of long lines, notify your hotline captain immediately.

61. **EQUIPMENT FAILURE:** What should I do if there are equipment problems at my precinct?

Voters should immediately notify the election officers if the voting equipment breaks down while the polls are open. In addition, voters can use an official paper ballot, and should request one if it is not offered.

If you are a hotline volunteer and learn of equipment not working properly at a polling place, notify your hotline captain, who will notify a voting machine expert or speak with election officials.

If you are a field volunteer at a polling place and the equipment is not working properly, notify the command center, which will notify a voting machine expert.

***Note to hotline volunteer:** If you learn of equipment not working properly at a polling place, notify your hotline captain immediately.

62. **EQUIPMENT ASSISTANCE:** I don't know how to use the voting equipment. Can I get help?

Yes. Any voter who needs assistance voting is entitled to have some person of his or her choice, other than the voter's employer, an agent of the employer, or an officer or agent of the voter's union, mark the voter's choices or assist the voter in marking his or her choices on the ballot. A voter may also request an election official to assist.⁴¹

63. **PHYSICAL DISABILITY:** I have a physical disability and need assistance. Is my polling place ADA compliant? Does my voting location have an accessible voting system?

Yes. All polling places in Maine should be accessible to people with disabilities. Maine law requires that each polling place be accessible to physically disabled voters, that at least one voting booth in each voting place be accessible for people with disabilities, and that at least one of the voting booths at each voting place be equipped with an enlarged instruction poster, a magnifying device, and an adjustable lamp for improved lighting. An enlarged sample ballot may also be available upon request.⁴² In the event that a polling place is not accessible to you, please contact the municipality election office.

64. **READING/LANGUAGE ASSISTANCE:** I am blind, have a physical disability, or cannot read English and require assistance in order to vote. Can I get assistance at the polls?

Yes. Any voter who needs assistance with voting is entitled to have some person of his or her choice, other than the voter's employer, an agent of the employer, or an officer or agent of the voter's union, mark the voter's choices or assist the voter in marking their choices on the ballot. A voter may also request an election official to assist.⁴³

⁴¹ Me. Stat. tit. 21-A § 672(1).

⁴² Me. Stat. tit. 21-A § 629(1)(A-1), (4).

⁴³ Me. Stat. tit. 21-A § 672.

Additionally, Maine law requires that at least one voting booth in each voting place be accessible for people with disabilities.⁴⁴ Voters should have the right to use Maine’s Accessible Voting System at every voting place. See the Maine Secretary of State’s website, “Accessible Voting” page: (<http://www.maine.gov/sos/cec/elec/voter-info/accessiblevoting.html>)

65. **CAMPAIGNING:** What rules apply to people campaigning or “hanging around” my polling place? Can people approach me?

No. A person may not influence or attempt to influence your decision regarding a candidate within 250 feet of the polling place. In addition, a person may not display or distribute campaigning or advertising materials, such as literature, posters, palm cards, buttons, badges or stickers, containing a candidate’s name or otherwise with the intent to influence a voter’s decision with 250 feet of the polling place.⁴⁵

66. **CHALLENGE:** Someone is formally challenging my vote. What should I do?

Only a voter of a municipality or an election official can challenge a voter’s right to vote and must do so through a signed affidavit under oath administered by the warden citing the specific source of the information or personal knowledge upon which the challenge of the particular individual is based.

If a person challenges a voter’s right to vote, the challenged voter may proceed to vote using a marked official paper ballot (not the voting machine). After the election at which the voter has been challenged, the registrar shall hold a hearing to confirm the qualifications of the challenged voter. The qualifications of the voter must be resolved within a reasonable time after the election, and the voter’s name will either be retained or cancelled from the central voter registration system depending on the outcome of the hearing.⁴⁶

67. **POLICE/MILITARY PRESENCE:** There are police/members of the military at the polling place. Is this okay? What should I do?

If there are police / members of the military at the polling place, the voter should notify the election official immediately, and the voter should still cast their ballot. Election officials are well-trained and there to help. Additionally, persons may not influence or attempt to influence your decision regarding a candidate within 250 feet of the polling place.⁴⁷

***Note to hotline volunteer:** If you learn of police/members of the military at the polling place, notify your hotline captain immediately.

68. **THOUGHT WAS REGISTERED:** My name isn’t on the voter registration roll but I thought I was registered. What should I do?

If a voter is at the correct polling place, the voter should ask the election official to call the registrar or clerk and confirm their registration. A voter may not vote if his or her name does not appear correctly on the voter registration list.⁴⁸ In order to vote, a voter should bring proof of identification and residence and ask the registrar to correct the mistake.⁴⁹ (See Question #5 for ID requirements) If the registrar concludes that the voter is eligible

⁴⁴ Me. Stat. tit. 21-A § 629(1)(A-1), (4).

⁴⁵ Me. Stat. tit. 21-A § 682(2), (3).

⁴⁶ Me. Stat. tit. 21-A §§ 673(1), (4), (7), 824.

⁴⁷ Me. Stat. tit. 21-A §§ 682(2).

⁴⁸ Me. Stat. tit. 21-A, § 115(3).

⁴⁹ Me. Stat. tit. 21-A, § 661.

to vote, they will issue a certificate allowing the voter to vote.⁵⁰ If the voter cannot prove his or her identity and residency, the voter must be given a provisional (challenged) ballot to cast their vote.⁵¹

69. **PROVISIONAL BALLOT:** I have been offered a provisional ballot. What should I do?

Inquire why the voter was offered a provisional (challenged) ballot. Was it for one of the following reasons:

- You are not enrolled in the proper party, if you are voting in a primary election;
- You are not qualified to be a registered voter because:
 - You do not meet the age requirements;
 - You are not a citizen of the United States; or
 - You are not a resident of the municipality or appropriate electoral district of the municipality;
- You registered to vote in person at your town office or on election day and did not provide satisfactory proof of identity and residency;
- You did not properly apply for an absentee ballot;
- You did not properly complete the affidavit on the absentee return envelope;
- You did not cast the ballot or complete the affidavit before the appropriate witness;
- You engaged in a prohibited communication while marking your ballot;
- You did not return your ballot to the clerk within the prescribed time;
- You voted using the name of another;
- You voted using the wrong ballot for the electoral district or political party, if applicable; or
- You violated a provision of applicable Maine election law?⁵²

Other than for these reasons, the voter should be able to cast a regular ballot. **A provisional (challenged) ballot should be a last resort.** Challenged ballots are counted along with regular ballots. If the number of challenged ballots could affect the outcome of the vote (exceeding in number the difference between winning and losing candidates), then they are reviewed by the Maine election authorities. If the voter must take further action to verify his or her identity or residency, the voter will be contacted by the election authorities before a decision is made whether to count or not to count the challenged ballot.⁵³

ACCESSIBILITY/ASSISTANCE

70. **LANGUAGE ACCESS:** I am not an English speaker. What language resources are available? Can I bring someone in the booth to help me understand the ballot?

⁵⁰ Me. Stat. tit. 21-A § 661(1).

⁵¹ Me. Stat. tit. 21-A § 121(1-A).

⁵² Me. Stat. tit. 21-A § 673(1)(A).

⁵³ Me. Stat. tit. 21-A § 696; Me. Sec'y of State, *Voter Information*, <https://www.maine.gov/sos/cec/elec/voter-info/index.html>.

Any voter who needs assistance with voting is entitled to have some person of his or her choice, other than the voter's employer, an agent of the employer, or an officer or agent of the voter's union, mark the voter's choices or assist the voter in marking their choices on the ballot. A voter may also request an election official to assist.⁵⁴

71. CURBSIDE VOTING: Is curbside voting available? How do I request it?

We recommend that the voter contact their municipal clerk; there is no express right to curbside voting, but the voter may drop off their absentee ballot with the municipal clerk or in-person absentee vote. For a listing of municipal election officials see the Maine Secretary of State's website, "Municipal Clerks & Registrars" page (<http://www.maine.gov/sos/cec/elec/munic.html>).

72. VOTER GUIDE: Can I bring a voting guide or reference notes with me into the voting booth?

Yes.

QUESTIONS

73. QUESTIONS: Who should I contact if I have questions about any of the above?

If the voter has any additional questions, the voter should visit the website of the Department of the Secretary of State, Bureau of Corporations, Elections and Commissions, on elections, at <https://www.maine.gov/sos/cec/elec/> or call (207) 624-7650.

Voters may also contact his or her local election officials. For a listing of municipal election officials see the Maine Secretary of State's website, "Municipal Clerks & Registrars" page (<http://www.maine.gov/sos/cec/elec/munic.html>).

⁵⁴ Me. Stat. tit. 21-A § 672.